

NLMC Regional Plan Public Comment Period Summary

The department held two scoping meetings to initiate the public involvement process for the Northern Lake Michigan Coastal (NLMC) Regional Plan.

- The public comment period was October 31, 2017 to November 28, 2017.
- Two public open houses were held to gather input:
 - Nov. 14 from 5 PM to 7:00 PM at the Stone Harbor Resort and Conference Center, 107 North First Avenue, Sturgeon Bay.
 - Nov. 15 from 5 PM to 7:00 PM at the Community Center, 901 Henriette Avenue, Crivitz.

Summary of the November 14 Open House in Sturgeon Bay

- 47 people signed in (approximately 10 to 15 attending did not sign in)
- 25 comment sheets or written comments were received

Summary of the November 15 Open House in Crivitz

- Four people signed in
- Zero comment sheets or written comments were received

Summary of Comments Received via the Public Comment Sheet (Online and Paper Version) and Emails:

The DNR collected 124 online public comment forms, 25 public comment forms and 14 emails during the comment period. A summary of the comments received is provided below.

Respondents:

- Expressed concern for the care of the natural resources found on the DNR properties, specifically concern about invasive species, support for forest regeneration and large blocks of habitat.
- Expressed support for preservation and restoration of the Eagle Bluff Lighthouse and expressed the desire to transfer the ownership.
- Encouraged the DNR to focus on invasive species (both terrestrial and aquatic) control on park lands and on other DNR lands.
- Expressed concern about recreation conflicts on the properties. Specific recreational conflicts included overcrowding, safety during the hunting season in state parks and motorized uses, such as snowmobiles and helicopter tours.
- Expressed support for re-establishing a ski hill at Potawatomi Park.
- Suggested infrastructure improvements. Improvements requested include flush toilets, larger parking areas (specifically at Peninsula Park), improved trails and roads, handicap accessible piers, clustering electric sites and a new office/nature center at Potawatomi Park.
- Conveyed staffing concerns, specifically mentioning the desire to have park rangers available seven days a week, to restore the full time naturalists to parks that have lost them and additional staff to manage properties and visitors.

- Indicated they would like more emphasis on winter recreation, specifically upkeep of the cross country ski and snowshoe trails.
- Indicated they would like horse trails and a horse campground added to one or more of the Door County DNR lands.
- Indicated they would like the DNR to add single track bicycle trails to Potawatomi State Park.
- Suggested that the fishing pier at Potawatomi be replaced as well as offering additional shore fishing opportunities.
- Requested additional rustic campsites and additional electric campsites.
- Indicated that the DNR should emphasize silent sports in Door County, such as hiking, biking, kayaking and sailing.

We received 14 emails with comments during the public comment period. Most asked questions regarding the planning process.

- Expressed support for Rock Island State Park and Peninsula State Park and requested we focus resources on the nature center at Peninsula State Park.
- Expressed strong support for single track bicycling at Potawatomi Park.
- Provided a list of suggested projects for Copper Culture Mounds State Park and expressed support for continuing the interpretation and educational mission of the park.
- Provided a list from the Door County Silent Sports Association created in 2011 and shared with the State Parks representative at that time with suggested improvements to Peninsula State Park and Potawatomi State Park.

A summary of comments heard at the open houses is provided below (they are listed in no particular order).

- General concerns about water quality and agricultural impacts to water quality.
- General concerns about invasive species in the parks and on other DNR lands.
- General concerns about land use in the area, specifically larger farms.
- Utilize the Land Legacy Report to assist us with planning for the ecological landscapes.
- The Nature Conservancy has created a prioritization for conservation efforts in Door County, would this priority list be helpful to the DNR?
- TNC/Fish Werks fish passage tool – this tool identifies and prioritizes fish passage barriers for Green Bay and Lake Michigan and would be useful in planning conservation actions on state properties.
- Desire for a boat launch between Baileys Harbor and Sturgeon Bay. Specifically, these folks had identified a plan/idea for a launch near Whitefish Dunes State Park
- Public access is important for Heinz Creek, Whitefish Bay Creek, and Hibbards Creek. Anglers have been seeing Great Lakes trout and salmon in these systems.
- Requests for the addition of horse trails and a horse camp to the DNR land in Door County.
- Requests for the addition of single track bicycle trails at Potawatomi Park.
- General requests for better up keep of the biking, hiking, cross-country ski and snow shoe trails that we currently offer.
- A group is interested in considering the re-opening of the ski hill at Potawatomi Park
- General concerns about the identification and preservation of cultural resources on DNR lands.
- General concerns about the trails, management and naturalist availability at Whitefish Dunes and two lists of proposed improvements for the park.

Finally, the public comment form asked respondents to tell us their favorite property in the region. The five Door County state parks were the top five properties selected. Bailey's Harbor Boreal Forest and Wetland and Mud Lake Wildlife Area were numbers six and seven. Thirteen respondents used the "other" category mostly to call out Eagle Bluff Lighthouse at Peninsula State Park as their favorite.

State natural areas receiving mentions include Moonlight Bay, Kronke Lake, Detroit Harbor and Rock Island State Natural Areas.